

An open letter to the NZ Government urging immediate action on climate change.

We the undersigned, representing diverse academic disciplines, call on the government to take robust and emergency action in response to the deepening ecological crisis. The science is clear, the facts are indisputable, and it is unacceptable to us that future generations in Aotearoa and globally should have to bear the terrifying consequences of climate breakdown.

Infinite economic growth on a planet with finite resources is not viable. And yet successive governments have promoted free-market principles which demand rampant consumerism and endless economic growth, thus allowing greenhouse gas emissions to rise. If we continue on our current path, the future for our species is disastrous.

The recent special report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is unequivocal. The world's leading climate scientists warn that we have only 12 years to halve global emissions and get on track to avoid warming of more than 1.5C and catastrophic environmental breakdown. They have advocated urgent and unprecedented global action. As Debra Roberts, co-chair of the IPCC working group says: "this is the moment and we must act now". The message could not be clearer.

New Zealand has a history of taking courageous political initiatives which have had global influence. We can, and must, do it again with bold and urgent action on climate. New Zealand could lead the world by immediately developing a data-informed plan for rapid decarbonisation of the economy. We demand that the government meets its duty to protect its citizens from harm and to secure the future for generations to come.

The views expressed here are those of the signatories and not their organisations.

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